Reviewer's report

Title: Are marginalized women being left behind: A population-based study of institutional deliveries in Karnataka, India

Version: 1 Date: 9 November 2011

Reviewer: Glory Alexander

Reviewer's report:

Minor Essential Revisions:

1. Confusion on title- Is it Are marginalized women being left behind: A population-based study of institutional deliveries in Karnataka, India or Caste is a barrier to institutional delivery: A population-based study in rural Karnataka, India

2. Page 9- numbers and percentages are given for each category of caste, but no number is given for Scheduled caste.

3. Page 12- Increase in institutional deliveries from 51% to 70% between 2003 and 2008 on page 3 and between 2003 and 2007 on page 12.

4. Page 15- In the list of abbreviations- AIDS, HIV and PMTCT can be excluded as these words don't come up in the article. However, ASHA and DLHS need to be added.

Discretionary revision-

Impact of education of mother on place of delivery. I understand that most mothers are possibly illiterate, but if this demographic data is available it would be good to know and if indicative that no education results in low institutional deliveries, then emphasis on education of girl child could increase institutional deliveries.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.